

# BLUE GRASS BLADE

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*DEVOTED TO THE PROPAGANDA OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT*



FRANKLIN H. HEALD.

Editor of Higher Science and Scenes Connected with His Life in the Far West.

# FRANKLIN H. HEALD

BRILLIANT WRITER, ESSAYIST AND FREETHOUGHT EDITOR.

Franklin H. Heald, of Los Angeles, California, was born July 10, 1856, at Springdale, Iowa, a little Quaker town where John Brown made his headquarters at the old fort. In looking backward hoping to find some commendable service which some of his ancestors had rendered humanity, he was surprised and chagrined to find that he came from a line of old, hard-headed and brutal half-humans, who would not be permitted to live in a civilized community at the present time. In fact they were but little better than the sacred history which we possess, of our blessed Saviour and his famous dirty dozen, the sweet-scented saints of olden time and Bible women, with the single exception that they would work, and seemed to have known who were their male parents. The farther back he went the more depraved they were. The best one in the lot was an old Scotch-Irish, semi-religious, half-rodent, who lived in a cave in the north of Ireland and had hair on his teeth like a cat-fish. He was the holy terror of the region around about, and when he became excited his roar could be heard for miles around, and everybody hid until his wrath subsided. Mr. Heald followed the back track of some of them who originated further south, far enough to become alarmed and ashamed lest some of his friends might find it out.

Let us hope the worst will never be known, and that his friends will be satisfied with contemplating the glorious future of the family if they give it any attention at all.

He is exactly one-quarter each,—German, French, English and Scotch-Irish,—the name being German and meaning hero, but he can find no clue to how they came by the name.

"Goodman Maey," of Whittier's poem, was the old English ancestor who escaped from England for Martha's Vineyard, the night before he was to have been hung for being a Quaker. Mr. Heald's father was one of old John Brown's men who escaped the gallows, and good fortune seems to have followed the family in this respect.

The subject of our sketch was raised a farmer boy, but having opinions of his own, left home at a very early age, crossing the plains with cowboys driving cattle. Being strictly temperate, he acquired a violent dislike to them, for their drunken and profligate habits, for while but a boy it became his duty to take care of both cowboys and cattle during their drunken orgies. He returned to his old home in 1874, better satisfied with the quiet old Quakers, and married his former sweetheart, a preacher's daughter, the most beautiful and refined girl in that region, who died in a year, the victim of an ignorant, so-called doctor, who was forced upon them by her over-pious father and people. This child-wife left him a little babe, who is now the well-known Edna Heald McCoy, of Elsinore, Cal., who at the age of twelve, wrote the remarkable poem, "A Child's Gethsemane."

In disgust with the votaries of the obsolete religion which robbed him of the only woman he ever loved, he packed his trunk for California, and after shooting wild game and prospecting over the mountains and deserts for a few years, he settled down to

make a second fortune, the foundation for which he laid by budding orange trees. In 1883, he bought 20,000 acres of land in San Diego county, and founded the city and colony of Elsinore, on the banks of the beautiful Elsinore Lake, which also belonged to him. Being young and ambitious, he built most of the town. When the "boom" collapsed, with the assistance and conspiracy of the churches, secret societies, money trusts, treacherous friends(?) and a villainous attorney, he lost most of his great fortune. Retiring to the Mojave Desert in 1895, he discovered the immense deposits of lignite coal near Randsburg, but was defrauded out of most of their value by fuel and railroad pools.

While investigating the reasons for the formation of coal, gold nuggets, etc., he found that the earth has been much farther from the sun, and in 1899 discovered the Procession of Planets, publishing and copyrighting the first edition in 1900.

In 1901 he commenced to publish a magazine, Higher Science, to teach his new discovery, but soon found that the truth cannot be established while Christianity stands in its way, so he took up the battle for truth against the superstition, mystery and ignorance of religion. About the time he started the magazine, he was stricken with locomotor ataxia, and is in Ohio this winter taking electric treatment, and hoping to get as well as ever.

The illustrations given with Mr. Heald's pictures call for some explanations, that the reader may better understand it, as the scenes there given represent events connected with his varied career.

The central figures show Mr. Heald in different positions, and our friends may see the manner of man he is.

Immediately underneath his pictures is a view of his beautiful home at Elsinore, California.

Just above this, to the right, is a cabin, which Mr. Heald built on Mt. Wilson thirty years ago, and which gave him shelter for years thereafter.

Above that, in the small elliptic, is Lake View Hotel, which Mr. Heald had erected 23 years ago. This is crowned by views of an ostrich farm and a logging camp, in both of which Mr. Heald was interested. The view at the top of the picture shows a bunch of cattle Mr. Heald drove down the Platte River in 1873. At the top, to the left, is the seal of the Society of Science, Letters and Art, of which he has been a member since 1899.

The canyon next appearing is where Mr. Heald lived near Pasadena, at which time he was a noted hunter after big game; below which is a view of a Bath House Mr. Heald built in 1887, at a cost of \$22,000, containing hot springs inside with a temperature of 132 degrees. The floors are of colored tiling, and it is a beautiful structure. Underneath this is a scene of semi-tropic growth, with a cluster of oranges, near the west end of Elsinore Lake, a picture of which is given in the small circle at the bottom to the right. It may be observed that Mr. Heald's first fortune in the West was made from budding orange trees.

Some of our readers may feel that pictures of Dave, Joe, and the burro, with many other things we read of from time to time, might also have been given, but limited space and opportunity forbid.

# Important Increase to Astronomical Knowledge

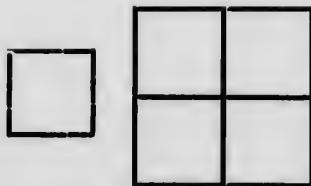
**New Telescope Will Soon be in Use that Will Magnify our Knowledge of the Universe in Four-fold Measure.**

(By Franklin H. Head.)

The largest telescope in the world is in the Observatory at Mt. Hamilton, Cal., and is 36 inches in diameter. It was a gift to the State of California by bequest from the staunch old Freethinker, James Lick, whose statue in San Francisco was the only object in sight of the City Hall not destroyed by the late earthquake, with the single exception of a wholesale liquor house a mile or so away,—all of which proves that if there is a god who attends to earthquakes, he is neither an ignorant fool nor a Prohibitionist.

This monster telescope was a wonderful achievement over its predecessors, and has contributed startling new facts to science during the past thirty years and what is revealed to us in the depths of space enables us to more easily solve nature's apparent mysteries on our home planet, the Earth, making astronomy one of the greatest fields for investigation.

There is, however, a telescope at Mt. Wilson peak, near Los Angeles, just now ready for use, which is almost twice as large in diameter, or in reality, gathering four times as much light, increasing our knowledge of the universe four times, as you will understand by the following diagram. In order to make the comparison more easy to understand, let us suppose the Mt. Wilson glass exactly twice the diameter of the Lick glass, and suppose the lenses to be square instead of round.



Then the single square would represent the comparative size of the Mt. Hamilton telescope, when compared to the Mt. Wilson telescope which is represented by four squares of the same size. In other words, the Mt. Wilson glass receives four times as much diffused light and concentrates it upon the pupil of the eye, and increases our knowledge four times. In effect, the Mt. Wilson glass will bring the human eye

nearer in that proportion to the celestial bodies. To illustrate, we are 240,000 miles distant from the moon, and the Mt. Hamilton lens in effect places our eye within 240 miles of it, or we can see the moon as plainly as if we were actually but 240 miles from it. Now the Mt. Wilson lens concentrates four times as much light, and the apparent distance will be lessened one-half or to 120 miles, and only astronomers can fully appreciate the importance to science (truth) of this increase in the size of a telescope.

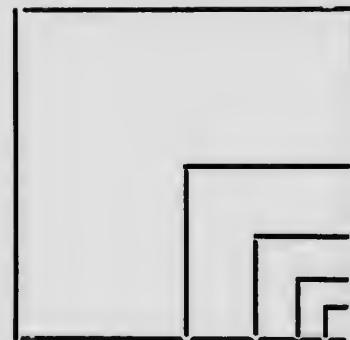
But it is not to be the limit of our increase of knowledge of celestial bodies, inasmuch as a wealthy Freethinker of Los Angeles has contributed the necessary funds to build a glass almost double the diameter of the Mt. Wilson glass which if it were exactly twice the diameter would again decrease the apparent distance one-half, or place the eye in effect but 60 miles from our satellite. This great glass has already been cast in Europe, after scores of unsuccessful attempts, and is now in a house built for the purpose at the foot of Mt. Wilson, its future home, where after a few years grinding by the most delicate machinery, it will be ready to double our knowledge of our neighbors in space.

Nor is this to be the limit of our knowledge of the worlds and suns around us, as an inventor has discovered a process by which he can make a lens 210 inches, or 20 feet in diameter, and bring us within 30 miles of the moon. This immense lens is to be glass only on the surface, like two watch crystals placed with their concave sides together, and filled with liquid after they are mounted.

And yet again a discovery has been made within the last few days, which, if true, will make all former discoveries but the A B C's of Astronomy, and show us, when we magnify photographs taken by it, the planets of other suns, and the very trees, plants and fossils upon our moon, Mars and Venus. It is said that a disc can be made upon which a concave surface is fixed, will be revolved at a very rapid speed; mercury will then be poured on this and it will at once assume an absolutely perfect concave mirror, which will reflect the refracted light of a star to a point as small as the pupil of the human eye; and it is said there will be no limit to the size of such a mirror, except in making machinery to revolve and handle it.

Taking a photograph by using a 40-foot

glass and then magnifying the photograph as much as the material of it will permit, we will be able to examine the surface of the moon almost as minutely as if we were walking on its surface with our hands tied,



1st square represents Mt. Hamilton glass, 2d Mt. Wilson, 3d Hooker, 4th Lick, 5th the revolving mercury disk, 40 feet in diameter.

so that we could not use a hammer or spade. This will undoubtedly enable us to determine whether animal or plant life exists or has ever existed upon our satellite, and the kinds of them; and perhaps reveal many truths about our neighboring planets, Mars and Venus, and if there is any truth in John's story of a cubic heaven, we may be able to find it, if not too far away. Untold billions of other suns will be brought into view from incomputable distances, until there is no more space to see others beyond; and yet it is my belief that we will find no god except the force in matter, which is caused by the expanding and contracting from heating or cooling, which is light, heat, electricity or any other condition of force.

What is true of our increase of knowledge in Astronomy, is no doubt true of every branch of science, and in proportion as we increase in the knowledge of truth, we lose our superstition, or former animal fear, of a great monster, a jealous and angry god, who will punish us forever with hell fire and damnation, if we presume to eat of the tree of knowledge.

In as much as most religious superstitions have had their origin in what was then the mysterious movements of celestial bodies, perhaps it is incumbent upon Astronomy to take a leading part in removing these occult animal fears and superstitions which it is doing so rapidly, and with the least possible resistance.

# The Birth of Our Little World

## REVIEW OF THE INHERENT FORCES OF NATURE AND THE ORDER OF OPERATION IN CAUSE AND EFFECT THROUGH WHICH CAME MATERIAL FORMS

(By Judge Parish B. Ladd.)

On the ceaseless tide of the ebbing ages, Man, as a wandering homo, sings his dirge to the foaming billows. The rotation of the earth on her diurnal course marks life's footprints on the dial of Time. The stars appear above the horizon to kiss the sun's departing rays. Time rolls on, while the fates harvest the golden fruits. Man floats on the fickle thread which spans the river of life, in its ceaseless flow to a world unknown, where stern fate bears him on her wings to the realms of not-ness, while time gathers her heroes from the autumn winds.

Out from the depths of floating nebulae, a lifeless universe was born; time without beginning or end was wrapped in the folds of eternity; for countless aeons worlds innumerable rolled on in ethereal space with not a living thing to break the awful silence. Space, time, worlds and eternity,—nothing else. What sublimity, what thoughts here engulf man's being! Eternity from her fathomless reaches, holds the boundless stars in her maiden arms with naught to disturb the serenity of a lifeless universe. Time is doing her work; new suns are born to throw their lurid flashes on the canvas of eternity. Countless ages ebb and flow; new worlds are ushered in.

In the solitude of this terrible conflict, Nature shows no evidence of design; not a thought moves on the pathless ocean of time; silence reigns supreme; ages on ages arise—arise, only to be lost on the sleeping depths of eternity. Time is in waiting; gravitation, the child of affinity, is at work; male and female elements hold a love feast; suns and other planets attract each other; the universe as a whole moves in harmony under the guidance of the law of mechanics; the suns give off their satellites as parents their children; the new born planets hover around their parents as chickens gather under their mother's wings; the universe is broken up into suns and their solar systems. In places nebulae is disappearing to furnish material for new suns. Through our large telescopes one may look on and see, with his own eyes, this process of world formation in all its stages from the first spiral motion to finished worlds, just as he sees through the microscope the action of

the bioplasm in the formation of the rudiments of life on our earth.

Our own great solar orb, as seen from our earth, is still writhing in the fiery abyss of his own grandeur; in his earlier revolutions condensation sets in, which still continues; in time vast rings were left on the outside to form satellites, who, like obedient children, continue to hover and revolve around their parents, all moving in harmony in obedience to the laws of affinity and attraction, needing no intelligence to guide them. In the midst of these planetary children, a little speck appears above the horizon; it is our little earth,—the babe of time, in its swaddling clothes.

Like all other celestial bodies, it obeys the mechanical laws of affinity and gravitation, revolving on its axles and around its solar parent, at first in a vaporous condition; condensation taking place, heat was generated, resulting in molten fluids which formed its photosphere, so dense, and extending so far from the main body that the sun's rays failed to reach it. This photosphere for countless ages, rising by heat, cooling above, and descending, kept the planet in constant action. But the time came when the cooling process gained the ascendancy, and the earth began to crust over, only to be broken up from the eternal heat, which kept the surface everywhere of even temperature. The internal fires acting on the surface gave us the igneous rocks, which being thrown up in ridges in some places, and sunken in others, gave us our mountain ranges and valleys, much the appearance as our moon now presents. In time, countless to us, the molten fluids forming the earth's photosphere, gravitated back to the main body, leaving the lighter substances.—hydrogen, one part to eight parts of oxygen, making water, which everywhere surrounded the earth; the hydrogen in time, obeying the law of gravity, mostly came back to earth, where it again, in obedience to attraction, left oxygen almost pure, which has and ever must remain the source of life on our earth.

For long ages the earth's photosphere in its agitation, was the result of heating and cooling; the terrible heat of the earth acted to expand and to force to great distances these fluids which when in contact

with the cold, either caused them to condense and return to earth.

Countless ages rolled on, during which great oceans and lakes were being formed, out of which vapors continued to rise and fall. By the constant fall of water, heat and cold, the rocks underwent a process of disintegration, the valleys were being filled up by the decomposed rocks which were carried down the mountain sides by rivers, rivulets and streams, which carried their contents not only into the valleys, but far out into the oceans and lakes, where stratification took place, thus forming sedimentary or stratified rocks; but our earth was not ready for the flora and fauna. Then followed vast ages which were lost in the lap of eternity ere a wing wafted the air or a fin moved to ripple the mighty deep; all was desolation, with not a sound other than dashing waters, foaming cataracts and volcanic eruptions, to break in on the deathly silence of the world's childhood. For long ages the earth and water were too hot to admit of the formation of life in sea or on land.

Nature is never in a hurry; a hundred million of years are to her as one drop of water is to the vast oceans. While the earth and water were cooling, she looked out on the vast expanse and smiled on the desolation, ever dreaming of the time to come when the earth, fed only by the sun's heat, would swarm with life. That time came when from out the waters and moist earth, first, appeared the germs of life: vegetable and low forms of animal life simultaneously appeared on the land and in the water.

Ages on ages came and went. Vast forests of gigantic trees, produced by the internal heat, covered all the land from pole to pole, and the oceans swarmed with life, while gigantic amphibia saurians made their habitats on land and sea.

In these ancient days the sun's rays, impeded by the vast quantities of aqueous vapors constantly rising and falling, but faintly reached the earth. During the early times, when these vast forests everywhere covered the land, land animals, except the primates, had not made their appearance. For long ages after the appearance of land animals, portions of the earth's crust were constantly being broken up into ridges and mountains, while depressions were occurring in other places. Evolution was at work. First, a few of the lower forms of life made their appearance, slowly followed by higher forms, which have been advancing from time to time. Man now arrogantly claim-

ing to stand at the head, was, by geology, made the last. It is not so certain that he is superior to all other animals, while it is very sure that he is the most cruel of all.

Geologists, while they correctly measure the order of the different epochs, and paleontologists fix the order of life, when they come to measure the time by thousands or hundreds of thousands of years, are but babbles in mathematics. The religious branch of them have never been able to extricate themselves from the foolish stories of their Bible as told by Ezra in the Thora. The period from the time our earth first crusted over, or from the first appearance of animal life thereon, is so vast as to be unthinkable; nor does this cover the measureless time which must have elapsed after the mass left the sun until life first made its appearance. While astronomers have guessed, and geologists have divided the time into epochs, classifying and naming them, yet it must be remembered that this division is only for convenience. Evolution makes no such division. It is all one continuous, unbroken chain of events.

For countless billions of ages our little earth revolved on its axis and around the sun, without an ear to hear its volcanic thunders, nor an eye to behold its stupendous grandeur; all was deathly silence, save the roar of the earth's internal fires. Turn but for a moment your thoughts to the mechanism of the boundless universe, all moving in obedience to the law of gravitation; then come back to our little earth, but a speck in space, and look at man in his nothingness, boasting of his importance over the living forms around him, that he alone was the sole object of creation,—how utterly contemptible he appears!

Nature is one stupendous whole, our earth but a speck, man but an atom, all the living world correlated, each animal and each plant giving and receiving support from all. Then and only then, may we see that each and every living thing is the equivalent of all others. Man no greater, no higher, no more important in the mechanical universe than the day-fly, the starfish, the mollusk or other animal forms. All came into being by the same process, live in the same way, go out in like manner, to live no more, except as chemical compounds for the building up of the organic bodies.

Seen from this standpoint, man's duty to himself and all the living world below, or about him, may be summed up in the word: Humanity!—do good to all the living world; no harm to any thing that breathes. Whatever others may do, let us as Freethinkers be ever mindful of these rules. While conducting ourselves in obedience to these precepts, we must ever remember that self-protection lies at the very foundation of life on our earth.

Having given a brief sketch of the birth of our little world, if the reader will follow us a little further, we will look at man from a biological basis.

From out of the depths of time, sterile we demand to know why we were born? why the animal world? why the boundless universe? All, says time is lost in eternity! Theories on these matters, which were true with the old Grecian, are a waste of vital forces. Do we even know that we live? What is this protoplasmic unit and its germinal vitality? This moving compound of anatomy—this chemical composition called man? An aggregation of molecules to be dissolved when their work is done! Thought says we live; Science tells us that we are ever dying that we may live. Life gambols in the morn of time, illy along the rugged paths of noon-day, and sinks with the departing sun of night to the realms of eternity, where it awaits the revivifying impulse of nature to be converted into some other form. The lily in beautiful fragrance floats on the stagnant pool today; tomorrow it fades and life is ended. The sturdy oak from the acorn rises; for a few years its foliage waves in the breeze; decay,—death,—that is all. The day-lily, from out its tiny ovule, illy in the sunlight a few hours, when it passes on to sleep forevermore. Like the planetary universe, the microscopic cell, a compound of living units all moving in harmony within its cell, gathers the floating atoms from without, expands, divides itself; a new life comes into being, the old passes on to live no more.

Man is but a chemical compound of such microscopic cells. These little cells classify themselves, each class being assigned to a specific duty. For a little while all work in harmony,—some gathering in food, others digesting it, while still others are at work in carrying off refuse matter, all this in obedience to the law of mechanism. The compound having fulfilled its destiny, death ensues; the protoplasmic body disintegrates to furnish materials for other organisms. Man so far, as believed, is the finale of all the living world. He came up through all the forms of life below: i. e. in his transit he has passed through all the forms of life that preceded him. He is one of the most helpless animals in the morn of life; devoid of consciousness at birth; a plaything in childhood; fondled in the arms of some sweet maiden in early manhood, he enters upon the stern duties of life a little later. A few years pass,—he sleeps to wake no more! Why born? Why live? Live to work or play for a few fleeting days or years, amid the sorrows, cares, anxieties, and miseries around him, and then pass on to the shades of nonentity. Or if born in luck, he may harness the steeds of fate,

ride in pleasure down the rugged grooves of time,—only to be overturned on the brink of eternity. All nature is impregnated with the germs of life, from which vitality is ever evolving, filling our earth with newborn organisms. The human machine, like all animal nature, is but an aggregation of living atoms; all we consume, even the air we breathe, is glowing with life.

Strictly speaking, there is no death. All is but change; a change of chemical elements; the man of today may be grass tomorrow; all that is required to effect the change is a change of the relative quantities of the compounds. Man may be the product of the laboratory, minus the vitality, which so far as now known, is found only in nature's larger store-house. Vitality, which we call life, is not a property, not a thug, but the resultant of organic compounds undergoing change in obedience to environment—a nonentity. The animal dies; in its decomposition the plant takes up its carbon; some other animal absorbs the hydrogen and oxygen; the organism is a different being today. The universe with its vast stock of life, moves in obedience to immutable laws,—laws purely mechanical in their nature.

Evolution, heedless of man's supplications, moves steadily on. Creeds, states and empires have come and gone without as much as making a ripple on the Pacific waters of time. The great states of Europe and America frolic in the throes of unbridled passions; wars between nations hold their ceaseless sway; kingdoms, empires and republics rise and fall; millions on millions of human beings go down to sorrow and death, unheeded and uncared for by their rulers. The animal world offers a field of prey, each feeding on the other.

It is an eternal war, a never-ending strife for existence; in the end a survival of the fittest. In the countless births, few survive infancy; the few are up with beak, tooth or claw, toilsome hand or sweating brow, to conquer the means of living. "Nature is one with rapine, a harm no preacher can heal; the May-lily is torn by the swallow, the sparrow speared by the shrike, and the whole little world where I sit is a world of plunder and prey." Nature is cruel; she takes no care for life or death; she is brainless; deaf to the calls and suffering of man or beast; she proffers no outstretched hand in the struggle for life. To her the life and death of man, beast, bird, fish, reptile, insect, worm or polyp is all the same.

"Some day philosophy no doubt,  
A better world will bring about;  
Till then the old a little longer  
Must blunder on through love and  
hunger."

Alameda, Cal.

## PERSISTENCE OF SUPERSTITION

Infamous Judicial Rulings Brought Forth  
by this Hydra-headed Monster, and we  
Must Strive for Human Freedom  
to Prevent any Repetition.

(By T. J. Bowles, M. D.)

That sacred state of the human mind called pure religion is the fairest and most beautiful flower that ever bloomed in the human heart, and its fragrance makes the life of its possessor a constant benediction.

The grand men and the noble women of history, who by precept and example, have illustrated in their lives the priceless value of rational religion, have no kinship with those who have experienced the agonies of a second birth, and passed through the painful ordeal of conversion, and had their sins washed away by the blood of a crucified god.

To this class belongs the priests and tyrants who have filled the earth with crime and sorrow; to this class belongs all the monsters of history who have been poisoned by the dangerous and deadly virus of superstition.

It was this same virus of superstition that influenced the supreme judges of Athens to administer the fatal dose of hemlock to the immortal Socrates, because he taught that virtue and morality were of infinitely more importance to the Greek people than the silly oracles of Delphi.

It was this same virus of superstition that poisoned the mind of the supreme court of our own Republic not long ago, and influenced them to hand down a decision that men with black skins had no rights that white men were bound to respect, and this decision was made because they found this superstition in an old book, written by barbarians more than two thousand years ago.

Here were two infamous crimes committed by two of the greatest judicial tribunals in all the history of the world; one was the Areopagus of Athens, and the other was the Supreme Court of the United States, and both were poisoned by the deadly influence of the gods and devils and priests of superstition.

In view of the sad and sorrowful effects of superstition on the mind of man during all his pilgrimage on this beautiful earth, let us all rejoice and never cease to give

thanks to the brave heroes and heroines who have fought this demon until priests no longer have the power to tear out the tongues of men and women nor subject us to the tortures of the stake and the flames of the fagots.

All the meanness, all the hatred, all the cruelties, all the infamies, and all the malignity of which the human heart is capable, grows and flourishes when the mind is poisoned by the devilish virus of superstition; it was the priests of superstition that invented the iron boots and iron collars for the grand men and noble women of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; it was the priests of superstition that crowded the dungeons of Europe for more than a thousand years with the good, the merciful and the just.

Not satisfied with the suffering, the cruelties, and the agonies which they visited upon good men, grand women and innocent children in this world they invented an everlasting burning hell of endless torment for all honest men and women who worshipped at the altar of the good, the beautiful and the true.

Every friend of humanity through all the dark and bloody centuries, who has labored to fill the world with light and love, has been persecuted by thieves, and millions have been crucified, and burned by the murderous devotees of superstition.

As an illustration of the awful and diabolical effect of superstition on the human mind, let me point out what would happen in the beautiful city of Muncie where I live: If a rationalist would tell his superstitious neighbors that the sleeping dead in Beech Grove Cemetery cannot come out of their graves, clad in the habiliments of the tomb, and walk through the streets of the city, they would kindly and cheerfully and sensibly agree with you; but if you would tell them that this never can happen, and did not happen at Palestine two thousand years ago, they would at once denounce you as an infidel and an atheist, and a very undesirable citizen, and persecute you as if you were a wild beast; or if you were to tell them that none of the good and beautiful women of Muncie ever became the mother of a boy whose "sache" was a ghost, they would promptly give their assent to this self-evident proposition; but if you would tell them that such an event never did happen, and never can happen, their faces would immediately exhibit all the savagery

of the tiger, and if they had the power it would afford them infinite delight to tear out your tongue, gouge out your eyes, and pour boiling lead in their ears.

Such are some of the awful effects of superstition on the human mind; toleration ceases, charity forsakes the human breast, and all the noble and generous impulses of the human heart are cruelly crushed by this hideous and cruel monster.

Not until Paine broke into fragments the devilish superstitions embalmed in an old book called the Holy Bible, was there to be found a single star of hope in the midnight darkness of the human race; up to his time only a little over a hundred years ago, the mind of the whole human race was saturated with superstition, and the whole human family was in abject bondage, and suffering all the tortures of the damned.

Down to the days of Paine the whole world was a mad-house swarming with imps and gods, and devils and ghosts, and the whole human family for nearly two thousand years was clothed in filth and rags, and their only friend on earth was death, pestilence and famine; the tyrants and kings and popes and priests literally lived on the flesh and blood of the poor, suffering and rolling millions; all the time and talent and energy of the priests of superstition were devoted to inventing instruments of torture, and building dungeons for scientists and philosophers, who were striving to rid the world of the incubi and succubi of superstition; the rootless sky that hangs in beauty over this lovely earth was kept lurid for fifteen hundred years by the flames of fagots that were piled around the feet and limbs of millions of grand men, noble women and innocent children.

When I think of the infinite horrors that the human family has suffered at the bloody hands of the priests of superstition, my faith is sometimes staggered in man, for today in the bright morning of the twentieth century there are one hundred and fifty thousand pulpits in the United States alone, who are defending these unspeakable atrocities.

But when I recall that France and the United States have broken the power of the priesthood, my faith is renewed, and I cherish the hope that liberty will finally make the entire circuit of the earth.

Let us rejoice and never cease to revere the memory of the noble heroes and heroines of history, who have fought the monstrous priests of superstition, and perished in flames and dungeons, to free the world from the grip of these heartless tyrants.

How long! O, how long will it yet be before mankind will learn that the right place to find heaven is here and now?

Muncie, Ind.

# Primitive Man a Mere Myth

Not Satisfied with Brother Snow's Rejoinder on this Subject, the Original Comes Back with Further Reply.

(By William D. Smith, M. D.)

I did think that until some one answered the questions I asked in the Blade July 5, 1908, that I would not write further for publication concerning these questions.

When I asked those questions I did not ask for argument; neither did I ask for theories. I wanted to know: How you know; what you claim to know. Instead of answering what I asked, I am told it would be more debatable form by asking that reasons be given.

At the time I asked those questions, I did not want the reasons of others, for I learned a long time ago that each person gives his ideas according to the faculty or faculties he has in use at the time, and claims that to be reasons why he believes or disbelieves. I do not ask for theories. If you say there is no god, and I ask you how you know there is no god, it does not answer my question by arguing some other. And, in as much as my questions have not been answered, I have concluded that you cannot answer them.

Before I answer Mr. Snow's article, I wish to say that I would be very much pleased to meet him and have a friendly hand-shake with him and joke him a little, for I think he is just the right kind of a man that is willing to give and take in a friendly way. I think he is on the road toward Freethought, and for that reason I must conclude that he is a Humanitarian, for it is only Freethought that makes any one love humanity. Greeds, beliefs, superstitions and ignorance have ever been and ever will be the principles that have and will try to destroy all forms. I love him, I love to read his article, and see his earnestness. I do not blame him for wanting to argue; it does people good sometimes to argue a little, and then you know in an argument it is anything to beat the other fellow. The truth is, I love any one that is an investigator, any one that has an inquiring mind and wishes to know the truth. In honest, I care not what their opinions may be, or how much they differ from my opinions, I love them. I could not be a Freethinker and do otherwise, for according to the faculties of the mind that have in action, they will think.

In the issue of the Blade of Mr. Snow attempts to answer "Who Knew Primitive Man" that I insist that matter is the gods. Pretty cunning, Mr.

honest, do tell the readers of the Blade when I ever admitted of gods. I deny that there are gods. I claim this: There is some ruling power, some infinite that I am unable to fathom. So far as the name, I care not, it may for convenience be called god if any chooses to name it; but gods, there are, two or ten thousand.--No, no, Mr. Snow, I never argued nor accepted that at all. But he admits that I am "more consistent than my more orthodox brethren." Thank you. Now, I do not understand that matter of anything else has ever been held in the light that he puts it. I claim that everything is perfectly just what it is, and each particle and principle of matter and mind are individually just what they ever have been and ever will so remain. There is no operation, but not footholds, in the sense you put it.

Not anything ever progressed or retrograded. Combinations have been destroyed, but the materials or principles of which the combination was composed never has been destroyed. Then he says when he sees the wonderful and complicated forces in nature, and whole worlds of it too, and how instantly they act, always the same, you under the same circumstances, and so for ages.

Now honest, Mr. Snow, when you say that are you not giving your evolution theory a hard hit? If it be true that man sprang from the animal, he from the bug, it from the protoplasm, it from the infinitely small, it from nothing. To produce according to evolution: Nothing produces something; something produces protoplasm; protoplasm produces cell; cell produces bug; bug produces animal; animal produces man. Now, Mr. Snow, what is man going to produce. It seems to take a long time for man to produce anything but man. Or is it possible that evolution, progressive, has stopped? If so, then there is no evolution. It died; but if it still exists and evolved until it cannot evolve any more, it is at a standstill, and that is super-duper.

But at such will not permit me noticing all these circumstances, there is one thing I must not claim. You say that I admit that, "Matter appears to reside in or be an attribute of matter." Oh, no, Mr. Snow, I do not, nor ever have I admitted any such proposition. I claim this to be self-evident: Matter is eternal, force is eternal; matter moves, matter from one location to another; matter never moves, but to the mind it appears to. We see matter move, we see force. Force moves mat-

ter from one location to another; this we see, and say matter moves; that is not true.

You say, "No one pretends to have seen primitive man alive." You say, "Primitive man was too ignorant or animal-like to write history." Well, well, Mr. Snow, have you fellows all accepted Spiritualism? And do you really get communications from those primitive men? Do they really come out and tell you they have progressed so much since they entered spirit life,—that notwithstanding their ignorance, animal-like nature while here on earth, they can now come and tell you about themselves? Oh, well, it is not to be wondered at for evolution, progressive, can do many wonders. I do not know how else you could know anything about them, since they were too ignorant and animal-like to write history, by which we could know anything about them.

But you try to back your assertion by some rude instruments that have been found. Now really, you do not know whether those primitive men produced them, or whether they were produced by the men that evolved from the primitive man, do you?

Is the finding of these rude instruments any evidence of evolution, progressive? Let me ask you and all the readers of the Blade this question: If you were to go into a forest surrounded by nothing but forest, wild animals, snakes, lizards, toads, mosquitoes, flies, hills and swamps, and live upon game, roots, berries, bark, wear skins of wild animals for clothing, exposed to all the disadvantages of that kind of life; no tools to work with; only sticks and stones that can be gathered in the forest,—under those conditions, what kind of instruments would you leave that would tell the story of your once existing in such a dismal place?

Now honestly, if ever there was a primitive man as represented, they must have had a great deal of mechanical skill if they were able to produce any implement at all. Admitting all that is taught concerning primitive man, and it only shows that the primitive man had all the faculties that man now possesses. It only shows that because of their environment, they did not use the same degree of the faculties that we today use. But you forget another very important fact: Many of the ancients had arts and sciences that we today know of, but they are lost to us. All these things only show that as the faculties of the mind are used, the result follows. In fact, we go back today for the majority of our teachings; we quote their sayings; we try to pattern after their precepts. If there is an evolution, progressive, why do nations rise and fall? Each generation uses different degrees of the same faculties and the result follows.

(To be continued)

## BLUE GRASS BLADE.

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## A LEXINGTON CHURCH TRIAL.

Rev. Walter P. Hines, of this city, was pastor of the Calvary Baptist church.

Now he is not.

In spite of presumed religious restraints and the constant instruction he was in the habit of giving to his flock that they should walk in the straight and narrow path, it now appears, from an official report of an official church committee, appointed to investigate, that the preacher aforesaid has occasionally turned aside and "on certain occasions" has "acted indiscreetly" to such an extent that the committee insists it was "in a manner calculated to impair his influence as a minister."

When the shepherd goes wrong, in what condition must be the flock? The "do as I say, but not as I do" is no longer tolerated. The average church membership demands something more than precept, and a little of the consistent practice must be apparent, even in a preacher. The cloth is no longer exempt from criticism. The pews are asserting their power over the pulpit. Spiritual advisers who do not act upon their own prescriptions are called to an account.

Let it be understood that gossip, the most wicked of all accusers, had linked the parson's name with certain females. This gossip became so persistent until open charges were made and an investigation ordered by the church authorities. Weeks elapsed. The investigation was pending. A committee was appointed to inquire into the subject matter of the charges made, and to make

due report thereon to the church. Vested with all the necessary power to this end, the committee pursued its course. Persons were sent for. Witnesses examined on either side. During the pendency of the inquiry, an intimation was given as to the ultimate findings, by the fact that Rev. Hines voluntarily tendered his resignation, announced his farewell sermon, which was rendered in due time, and he is out of a job. In spite of this the committee pursued its duties to a finality and submitted its report. Now the woods are burning and the tongue of gossip is adding fuel fuel to the flames. The preacher, through his devoted wife, is now threatening litigation against persons not designated, and the end is not yet.

One of the most significant features of the report is that the committee states that the object of the inquiry was to ascertain whether or not the pastor under investigation had been "guilty of immoral or unchristian conduct, or of indiscretion unbecoming a Christian minister." On this the report is silent. It declines to say whether the pastor was guilty or innocent. It simply states that they found him to have, on certain occasions, acted indiscreetly, and in a manner calculated to impair his influence as a minister.

It is perhaps significant that the "immoral or unchristian conduct" is stated in the alternative, and not in the conjunctive, mood. Whether this was by accident or design, the Blade can not say. Immoral conduct does not of a necessity imply unchristian conduct. Neither does Christian conduct imply moral conduct. A man may be a Christian and yet be guilty of immoral conduct, as morality is known and understood today. Morality does not belong exclusively to parsons or to church members. Long prayers and unisons amens may be indicative of Christian conduct, but in his dealings with his fellow man must his moral character be judged, not in his professed piety.

Of course, the investigating committee is more than anxious to shield and protect the church. They are members thereof. With them the church is of higher importance than the parson, or what becomes of him. They can get another parson, but a new church would mean much more to them. Thus, reading between the lines, noting the subterfuge contained in the report, cognizant of the further fact that the committee "refuses to discuss the matter further," as reported in the local papers, it would appear that there is more in the proceedings than will ever be brought to the light of day.

If Rev. Hines is not guilty, as charged, he was entitled to a verdict in his favor and a plain declaration of his innocence at the hands of the committee. If he is guilty, as charged, then the public is entitled to know the facts, and all the facts, which are now being assiduously suppressed. The findings of the committee, as shown by its report, is decidedly unsatisfactory. It is neither just to the accused parson nor to those who have brought the charges against him. It leaves him with a cloud of suspicion hanging over his head which the years may never remove. Too much of self-interest is apparent on the face of the report, and if Rev. Hines is innocent, knowing it, as he must, we sympathize

with him in his announced effort to carry the matter to the courts for a final and satisfactory hearing.

And back of all this, what do we see? That Christian moral precepts, no matter how persistently taught, are not sufficient, in themselves, to act as a secure guide to moral conduct, for assuming that the "influence" of the person under discussion "as a Christian minister" has been "impaired," no matter to what degree, or in what respect, there still remained the inner conscious monitor irrespective of so-called Christian teaching. Minus this inner conscious monitor the precepts of Christianity are powerless to influence making for right or wrong. Its vicarious atonement and redemption from sin through the shedding of innocent blood constitutes a沼 upon moral conduct and its impotency is amply understood in the proceedings herein discussed.

But a few short months ago no man stood higher in the estimation of the people of his congregation. Today he is a cynosure of all eyes. The committee, by its report, points the finger of suspicion toward him, and it did not have the moral courage to declare him either innocent or guilty. The committee is in a position to know. The public is not. The public can only surmise. The committee has heard all the evidence. The public knows nothing of what was testified to. If Rev. Hines is possessed of sufficient moral courage to go behind the action of the committee, and possessed of a personal knowledge of innocence, doing so, we wish him every possible success.

#### THE EMERGENCY FUND.

Every week finds something added to this worthy fund, and by it we have been able to relieve many aged Freethinkers of any financial obligations to the Blade, and they are getting it just the same. The result, so far, is extremely gratifying, and we express our heartfelt thanks for such a showing. The fund now stands:

Previously acknowledged	\$23.00
H. Adams	.50
Another friend	5.00
C. O. Boyd	1.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$29.50</b>

#### REJOICE WITH MRS. INGERSOLL.

Justice is rendered at last.

The widow and family of the great apostle of human liberty has finally triumphed after protracted and costly litigation to recover fees due to the late Colonel Ingersoll for professional services rendered under contract.

Prof. Thaddeus B. Wakeman, of Coseob, Conn., writes that the United States Supreme Court, at Washington, has reversed the findings of the lower courts in the suit of Mrs. Robert G. Ingersoll, for her deceased husband's compensation in the legal settlement of the Davis estate.

Here is justice at last, for the claim was in every respect just

and equitable. The estate involved millions, and Ingersoll was to have \$100,000 if he succeeded in obtaining an equitable division. The preparation and trial was difficult and long; the jury disagreed. Then Ingersoll got the parties into a negotiation for settlement, practically retried the case before them, with a result satisfactory to all concerned. Then it was claimed that because the final trial was not in court, but before, with and by and for these parties, the contract for his services was not applicable. The lower courts were confused, but now we may rejoice, not only with Mrs. Ingersoll, but with Uncle Sam, that his greatest court has been able to secure to the beloved family of the great advocate the means he had justly earned for their benefit, which the papers say will now be, with interest, about \$138,000.

#### MENTAL STIMULANTS.

The principal aim of all rational culture and education is to adjust the relations of the individual, especially the close and applying student, to the demands made by his own age, and, for this important reason alone, it will employ for the purpose indicated all those subjects that come home to him most directly and intimately and are best fitted for rousing and sustaining a pleasurable mental activity so declared by reason and confirmed by a personal experience.

If properly cultivated this instinctive love of pleasurable activity, so marked in the years of youth, may be made a powerful means of mental improvement. The strength of government, in the past as well as the present, was found in its appeal to the dread of punishment as a motive to right conduct. By these immoral tendencies are wrought, false notions are acquired and an erroneous incentive appears. It will not bear comparison with the modern rationalistic doctrine, which teaches and maintains that more beneficent results accrue to society by stimulating mental activities from a desire for happiness, rather than a dread of punishment, and in this contrast may be the differences between the theological systems of the world and the rationalist doctrine be found.

The human mind can not be roused into any serious stage of mental activity by the things of twenty centuries ago. To elicit responsive action the mind must get interested in the things of today. No thinker will deny that an empty and useless shell of a fact has the same relation to the mind that a living and applicable one has. Nothing can arouse, quicken and mold the mind into active thought like the present realities with which the mind has to deal. Once intellectual desire can be created, the mind will naturally follow the lead set. With the slow emergence of right ideas respecting the uses of the world, we shall discover that the real scene of human action and enjoyment is also the true source of right inspiration and of the noblest incentives to mental effort.

Science, in its application to daily life, and there is not a department of mental or material activity with which science has

not to deal, is now successfully grounding itself in the order and truth of nature. Armed with the appropriate knowledge of men and things, inspired with the hope of a better and happier future, to which we see all things tending, the Freethinkers of the world enter this great field and, properly, call it their own. In it they trend and work with a robust boldness that can not be simulated by the votaries of faith, and a truly dispassionate temper which the imminent questions of the times so decisively demand.

All institutions based upon theological considerations are grounded upon a sort of culture that is suited to their necessities. They have grown up with the course of the ages. They idolize the past; they worship precedent and authority; they dread independent inquiry; they recoil from the thought of freedom as from some form of vice; they are mental servitors to the dust of centuries long dead.

On the other hand freedom and science have had a coeval destiny. They have suffered together, and as a natural consequence, they have developed and grown together. Both have broken through the bonds of theological proscription, and they have constructed a watchword for their joint use—Progress. With this they have both learned how to outgrow and subordinate the past, accepting the essential and casting aside the non-essential.

In this brief outline we have the plan of operation of the best mental activities of the race, the results achieved and the prospects of the future, provided these activities are increased. Free-thought is to encourage. Christianity to repress.

#### THE BLADE'S BOUND VOLUME.

With this issue we are able to announce the near completion of the year's issue of the Blade, and acquaint our readers with what they may expect the bound volume to contain.

Those who have been subscribers from before and at the time when the change in form was made will recall that the first picture printed on the first page of the new paper was that of Charles C. Moore, founder and editor of the Blade. This was followed by pictures of Thomas Paine, Voltaire, Girard, Shelley, Dr. Wilson, Mrs. Henry, Mrs. Closs, Ernestine L. Rose, Ingersoll, Dr. E. B. Foote and many others who have aided the work of mental emancipation. From that time on we have missed but one issue without a picture, and that week we were disappointed in theents failing to arrive. Next week, with the issue of December 27, will witness the pictorial reproduction of Thaddeus Burr Wakeman, acknowledged to be foremost among the scientific and rationalistic thinkers of the age, for years identified as an active worker in the ranks of Free-thought. This will complete the fifty issues, as the change was made January 19, last, causing two issues of the present year to be printed in the old style and form.

Here, friends, are fifty portraits and biographies of prominent Freethinkers, in addition, there is a vast quantity of reading matter from the pens of the best humanitarian writers the country

affords. Scientific and rationalistic instruction and an abundance or argument against the theological conceptions of the day. The articles contained therein assail the very fundamentals of orthodox Christianity and will offer an opportunity for educational facilities without a peer in its line.

This bound volume can be had for \$3.50. Allowing the usual annual subscription price of \$1.50 for the paper itself, we are thus asking the modest sum of \$2.00 for a handsome binding and trimming, with the name of the purchaser inscribed on the outside cover in gilt letters. If the book is intended as a present, we will attach any name desired thereon for that purpose.

If you wish a copy, now is the time to order, if you have not already done so. We have thirty-two orders booked now. This offer will be kept open until the last day of December, and any order received up to that time will be filled, but no volume will be bound save those previously ordered.

#### CHRISTMAS TIME.

During the coming week the Christian world will again indulge in a celebration of the supposed anniversary of the supposed birth of a supposed man-god, and, in so doing, they still proclaim a falsehood to the credulous and unthinking.

Aside from the inconsistencies and absurdities of the printed stories of this supposed event, modern intelligence scorns the very idea of an atoning savior born in the form of man, with all the faults, failings and passions of man, and yet, capable of discarding his humanity at his own volition and assuming the character of a divinity when the purpose suited him.

Students of history know that such an event could not have occurred at the time stated without creating more serious and deserving comment from the writers and historians of that period than may be found. Moralists shun the theory because of the false incentives it creates and rejects the entire system as placing moral considerations on a wrong basis. Thinkers reject it because it is out of harmony with the orderly procession of nature and inconsistent with reason and experience.

Thousands, nay, millions, realize and know the truth of the statements here made, and yet untold extravagances will be made in order to perpetuate a foolish myth, and humanity suffers thereby. Just a few, compared with the multitudes, will profit by this superstition, and fools there be who work might and main to support it, and the few who do profit by it, unmindful of their pressing duties to the race and to themselves.

If Christ was not born; if Christ did not die on the cross; if Christ did not rise from the dead, then, indeed, is all Christian teaching vain. And it is vain. It is a safe statement in which to indulge, that the Christ of the gospels never was born; that he did not die upon a cross, and, therefore, never arose from the dead. This has now gone far beyond a mere negation of Christian assertion, but is an affirmative truth, conceded by all who have studied the subject, save those who expect to profit thereby.

In any event it is a fact that Christ was not born on the 25th

## BLUE GRASS BLADE.

day of December, else shepherds could not be watening their flocks by night at such a season, even in Palestine, and if this feature of the show be destroyed, the entire myth goes with it. As a matter of fact, so many have undertaken to write a "true" history of the birth and life of Christ, that the day of his birth has been fixed, by different writers throughout the entire calendar of the year. Certain it is that all can not be "true" lives of Christ. The thinking man, however, rejects them all, and regarding the a dead deity at the expense of the many.

and ambitions, will strive to elevate all instead of worshipping a dead deity at the expense of the many.

Aside from the theological aspect of the Christian festival, there are opportunities for all to make it a season of joy and happiness. It comes at a season of the year when the forces of nature operate to prevent physical labor to some extent, and the cozy cheerfulness of the fireside, offering a comfortable protection against the frost and cold of winter's storms, furnishes an opportunity for family reunions, enjoyments and domestic bliss. In so far as these elements may be found and enjoyed, the season is not without its rewards, but the pernicious feature is the theological fantasy with which interested persons have surrounded it.

Enjoy Christmas, if you wish, but it is altogether unnecessary to furnish means of profit and emolument to a coterie of false teachers and preachers. Enjoy Christmas, if you can, but know ye, that in the extension of a helping hand to some more unfortunate creature, one who has lost in life's great battle, will bring you a greater and sweeter pleasure than to donate vast sums of money to the support and maintenance of a hoary superstition.

The next subsequent issue of the Blade will be the last for the year 1908, and it will be in every way a worthy product of all its predecessors. In it will appear an article from the pen of Prof. T. B. Wakeman, a personal and valued friend of the Blade's editor, which should be read, studied and noted upon by every Freethinker in America. Its pointed argument is made to deal with Freethought propaganda in America, and the position of the Liberal press. Half a century of practical experience has especially fitted this eminent author to treat such a subject with authority.

With the coming year we shall offer, or, at least, suggest, for the serious consideration of our friends, a new plan for the conducting and operation of the Correspondence School, the primary object of which is to make tuition free to every subscriber of the Blade and create a corps of capable and efficient teachers. Watch for the plan and study upon it.

As a means of enabling us to catch up in matters of finance, and meet our obligations at the first of the year, we have mailed a bill to each of our delinquent subscribers, indicating thereon the amount of their indebtedness to us. We hope that immediate responses will follow.

The Blade is going to double its circulation during 1909. It is a strong statement to make, but we mean it, absolutely, and every present subscriber is going to help in the work. We will have more to say about the method of doing it in our first new year issue.

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It is gratifying to observe that the cause of Secular Education in England can boast a goodly array of capable and eminent advocates, and that appearing prominently among them is President G. W. Foote, of the National Secular Society. Secular education is a leading political issue in England. The church, as usual, is resisting the movement.

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Editor J. Spencer Ellis, of Secular Thought, Toronto, Canada, in a personal letter the blade says that in America Freethought propaganda appears like so 'dead and buried, while the advocates of credal superstitions are more active and energetic. Sadly, sorrowfully, we must admit that the charge is true. It ought not to be thus, and it need not be if Freethinkers will but rouse from their lethargy and show themselves equal to the emergency.

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We have some cause for congratulation, anyhow. Freethought societies have been organized at Washington, D. C.; Omaha, Neb.; St. Ansgar, Ia.; at San Francisco and Cincinnati. Others are in course of formation at Muncie, Ind.; Marietta and McConnelsville, Ohio.

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In one more week and we begin to bind up the 1908 issues of the Blade. When in the hands of those who have subscribed for it we know they will declare it a volume of both use and beauty. Only \$3.50.

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Owing to an accident with the press while the last two issues of the Blade were being run off some of its pages were marred by the metal shgs being pushed over and we did not have the time or the means to reprint the issue. We hope to avoid this hereafter.

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Elbert Hubbard, the Roycrofter, is to lecture at McConnelsville, Ohio, February 8, 1909, under the auspices of a new Liberal Club recently organized as one of the direct results following the lectures given there by the Blade's editor in September last.

Is it not true that the world is not in vain.

While on a recent visit to the blade office, Mrs. Josephine K. Henry appeared in far better health than she has been for a year or so, or since the death of Captain Henry. Our readers will be gratified upon knowing this, and they may have good reasons to anticipate some further products from her brain and pen.

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If ye have the truth it is necessary that you carry it to others.

## Does a Believer Exist?

With Concluding Argument Upon the Impossibility of God's Existence.

(By J. M. Gilbert.)

(Concluded.)

But nothing suits Christians better than to pray and agonize in public. The church is a public place the same as a synagogue. At a recent meeting they came out and preached and prayed at the Postoffice, at the drug store, and on the street corner. They are thus branded as a generation of hypocrites. "For a pretense they make long prayers" in the synagogues and on the streets, and wish to be counted holy for their much speaking. Jesus is said to have sent the multitudes away and prayed alone, except one time he was praying alone while his disciples were with him. Those who prayed in public Jesus called hypocrites.

A sensible person will not pray for rain or against rain. He will not pray against the boll worm or any other pest. But there is just as much sense in praying such prayers as any kind of prayer. Is it not written "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer," etc? The sensible person knows that natural causes and forces cannot be changed by prayer. The natural forces are blind and take no more heed for the good of man than for the lowest worm that crawls beneath his feet. There is no intelligence behind them. If there was, some districts would not be withered by droughts and others drowned by floods. The pests would not destroy the rewards of honest toil. If God knows the wants of man, he will grant them if it is his will to do so. So then prayer is useless.

### GOD.

What is God? Is he a thing? If he is no thing (nothing), he does not exist. If he is a thing, and things cannot exist without being created, then God had to be created. This last God would have to be created by another God, and so on ad infinitum. The argument for a creation would prove the necessity for a multitude of gods, and there would be no end to it. Such an argument is reduced to absurdity, and is worthless to prove anything. If God can exist without being created, the universe and all it contains can exist without being created. The Bible says that all things are possible to a believer. Then let the believer create something new. Then we will believe him, his book and his god, and not until then. It is irrational to say that some things had to be created while another did not. We know that we have the universe, it is manifested to all our senses, while a

God is not. The universe is infinite and includes everything and all space. It is a self-evident truth that two things cannot occupy the same space at the same time. If God existed, the universe could not exist. But the universe exists; therefore, a God cannot exist. What is a person who prays to imagination?

The sun-worshippers who prayed to the sun, and the heathens who bowed to idols of wood and stone, were more rational than those who pray to space, to nothing, to a figment of the imagination—to an assumed God that cannot be seen and heard and is not manifested to any of the senses. Prayer is the most irrational act that any one could be guilty of.

To one not blinded by the musty cobwebs of a reason-defying superstition prayer is recognized as the vainest of vain things. It is seen to be of no more force than the baying of a dog at the moon, or the incantations of heathen savages to drive away eclipses. But Christians are all the time singing about the "old time ignorance" (religion) as good enough for them. A rock in one side of the sack to balance the pumpkin in the other side was good enough for the simpleton, because it was good enough for his father. The people of long ago used the old reap-hook, the bull-tongue plow, the old hand-loom, and the old ox-cart because better ways had not yet been invented. What would you think of a man saying now, "These things were good enough for our fathers and they are good enough for me?" Our ancestors believed in the old superstitions, such as witch-craft, etc., and believed the "old time religion" because they were no better informed. The truths of modern science had not yet reached them. Most of the orthodox preachers of today are doing their best to perpetuate the "old time religion" (ignorance) because their jobs depend upon it. They are the prime cause of the people remaining so long deluded.

Randolph, Texas.

### THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS.

Debasing Influences Cast upon the Mind of Childhood by the Orthodox Superstition.

(By Dr. A. A. Bell)

The dogmas and doctrines of the Christian superstition disgust the mature mind, and spreads a terror over the minds of innocent children.

How much longer, yes, how much longer, will intelligent men and women do violence

to their own nature by continuing to preach such odious things that are calculated to strike terror to the hearts of children, aye, and even cast a cloud over the minds of grown people, as the records of our lusane asylums attest.

If one is really anxious to learn and to know how awful and dreadful the teachings of Christianity are, let him, or her, read the 7th sermon of Wesley, in Vol. 11, and the 17th sermon of Spurgeon in the volume of sermons accredited to him. Spurgeon's 17th sermon is upon the eternity of punishment by and under the decrees of our dear heavenly father. It is my candid opinion that not one in ten who profess to read can tell what Wesley, Kempis or Spurgeon said. Wesley says that our heavenly father fashioned the soul so that it could endure a furnace fire without being destroyed, on the same principle as asbestos. The pious Kempis, with all his piety, held that sinners would have different modes of punishment meted out to them. The misers, for example, he held would have molten gold poured down their throats. In one of his sermons Spurgeon said:—

"Young man, you who are standing so unconcerned in the aisles, unless you repeat of your sins, God (I suppose meaning our heavenly father) will punish you to all eternity. Not your soul, but your material body, with a material fire, yes, unto all eternity."

Reader, did you ever reflect upon the word "Eternity?" The very idea is beyond our conception. Can it be possible that there is a man who believes that there is a god who would punish a human being, whom he had made, to all eternity, with a non-consuming fire, or in anywise to all eternity, because he failed to believe or because he simply could not believe as he did?

Oh, ye priests and preachers, what an odium ye bring upon the name and character of the very god ye worship and proclaim! What a shame it is that you are permitted to hide yourselves behind a book made by yourselves for the sole purpose of degrading men and women and making them subject to your own will and command.

But your days are numbered. The blessed light of truth now shines through its dark pages and your tricks are thus exposed.

### Comes Back to the Blade.

IOWA.—Do you publish the paper that used to be called the Blue Grass Blade? If so please send me a copy of it and the price of it a year. I used to read it. It is an infidel paper and I liked to read it. If you publish it yet I will take it for a year or as long as I like it. A man by the name of Moore was editor, I think. I would send the money now but I don't know if you publish it any more.

S. A. TEEPS.

## The Blade's Correspondence

From Ingersoll's Granddaughter.

NEW YORK.—I feel that I owe you an apology for the tardy acknowledgment of your most kind letter which afforded me the deepest joy and satisfaction. If it is not too late I desire to join the Correspondence School.

Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain sincerely yours, EVA INGERSOLL BROWN.

### Appreciates Marriage Notice.

OREGON.—We wish to thank you for the nice notice of our marriage in the Blade of November 22nd, 1908. Please send us ten or twelve copies of that issue, two copies of "The Virgin Mary," and two of Dr. Wilson's little pamphlet. Enclosed please find one dollar to pay for same. Remember me to Mrs. Hughes. Hope all is well with you.

MRS. L. G. HERRIN, Box 65.

### One of the Good Cheer Letters.

OHIO.—I herewith enclose \$5.00 (five dollars) in currency. Please renew my subscription and accept the balance as a donation to the Blade. I am very sorry to learn of your struggle for existence and am willing to help you along as much as I possibly can. Every little helps, and every Freethinker should feel that we cannot afford to let the Blade go under. Our religion costs nothing, then why not be able to help this great cause?

Since I am writing this letter my memory is again refreshed, I see before me those intelligent faces that I had the pleasure of gazing upon at Canal Dover Convention, and again I am delighted to learn that a joint debate between Rev. Keyser and yourself will again stir up this community. I am confident that you can do the Rev. up so he never will debate again.

Nothing but death will keep the writer from attending.

Under separate cover I mailed you marked copy of the Cleveland Leader in which you will find interesting matter.

The pastors are busy everywhere planning new schemes to save their threadbare religion. Reason's triumph over superstition is keenly felt everywhere.—PETER BIMELER.

### Blade and Emergency Fund.

NEW MEXICO.—Enclosed find two dollars. One dollar and a half for renewal and fifty cents for Emergency Fund. I hope some of those in arrears will dig up and help out the dear old Blade.—H. ADAMS.

### Sends Good Encouragement.

TEXAS.—Enclosed find draft on New York for \$5.00 to renew my subscription for the the Blade from December 8, 1908 to December 8, 1909. You can use the extra dollar for whatever purpose you see proper. Best wishes for you.—C. O. BOYD.

### The True Liberal Spirit.

TEXAS.—Regarding your friend in Buffalo, who has a cancer and is not able to pay for his Blade, find two dollars here enclosed for which credit him as long as it will last. I will also treat him for the cancer. If not advanced too far, and without a cent of cost to him. Please inform him or send him this letter.—G. B. LAMBETH.

(We have done both. Our thanks are due to the writer of the above for his extreme generosity. His letter has been sent to the person for whom it is intended, proper credits given and we have also sent the name and address to Dr. Lambeth that he may get in communication with his prospective patient. Ed.)

### Good News From Indiana.

INDIANA.—We are now engaged in perfecting an organization in this city for Freethought propaganda work. The plan is to have a lecture by men and women of ability every Sunday at 2:30 p. m.

We have a fair supply of talent in this city, but the plan contemplates frequent lectures by distinguished men from every part of the United States, who will volunteer to aid in this work, for the liquidation of their expenses in going from and coming to our city. If the gospel of Naturalism every triumphs over the barbarism and savagery of supernaturalism, we must organize in every city, and make some personal sacrifice; and in view of this vital and incontrovertible fact, I now ask, if I may depend on you for two or three lectures for 1909?

I recommend this plan to my Freethought friends throughout the United States, and I verily believe that it will accomplish more for the overthrow of superstition than any other method that has ever been devised.

T. J. BOWLES, M. D.

### For a Bound Volume.

IOWA.—You may place me on your list for one of the bound volumes of the Blue Grass Blade and when ready let me know and I'll remit or you can forward it and I will remit by return mail. Either way will suit me, but it is the safest way to get your money in advance. That is the way I do when I repair a violin. "Cash on Delivery," and you bet I live up to it, but about all I have got in this world is my "Ward" and when that gets so it is not good I want the devil to close on the mortgages at once.—L. C. HOXSIE.

### New Year's Wishes.

KENTUCKY.—Another year will soon vanish with all its smiles and tears; another year we soon will welcome, with mingled hopes and fears; for memory sometimes upbraids us, with many a broken vow. Trembling we falter upon the New Year now and yet, whatever failings have bowed the Blade in the past this New Year may be brighter and better than the last.

But follow close the golden rule,  
And you shall surely win.

... and bring out some goodlets with Natures  
... the sun ANNIE SPEARS.

### Sends His Renewal.

TEXAS.—After so long a time I will try and throw my little mite in your way. It is better than not at all. So enclosed you will find three dollars which if I make no mistake will move my tab to the first of June 1909 after which time I will have to ask you to discontinue the Blade provided I don't renew on or about that time. I like the Blade and have read it for six or eight years and I certainly did like Brother C. C. Moore as a liberal writer. He hit straight out from the shoulder and I thought that he done right in so doing, for he was hurtled and harassed around enough to set a wooden man into profanity and I am truly sorry that the old man had to depart this life as soon as he did, for Freethought lost a good writer and one that was well posted on the old scrap book called the bible. And the Blade under his supervision was a good editor and is also under the present editor.

Well as to myself, I am sixty-two years old and never belonged to any church and never belonged to any religious orders, except the A. F. and A. M., and was expelled from that order on account of my religious or no religious belief, as the case may be. Well I lost no sleep over the matter.

I informed them and am that way yet, that I had no principal to trade for creeds. I have a creed of my own and of course it is a good one or I would not hold to it, any way it is not on the market to trade for principal. So I rest easy on that score for I have a foolish notion that a man's creed goes a long way towards making his principal and as I have no J. C. to go to to get my sins forgiven, I know of no one to go to but the injured party and if I get his or her forgiveness that makes me feel better and not quite so sneaky.

Well John B. I wish that I had met you while you lived at Dallas, as I was raised at that place. Kind wishes to you and long live the Blade.—J. C. MILLER.

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Josephine K. Henry, Versailles, Ky.

Dr. J. B. Wilson, 206 East Fourth Street, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Parker H. Sercombe, Editor Tomorrow, 139 East 56th Street, Chicago, Ill.

John R. Charlesworth

Marion W. Marby, ...

A. J. Clausen, St. Albans, W. Va.

J. C. Iannou, 3515 Wallace St.,

Philadelphia, Pa.

Stanberry Alderman, McConnellsburg, O.  
H. H. Lane, 292 N. Front St., New Haven, Conn.

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